

REMARKS

Claims 26-29, 32-37, 39-45, 47-54, 57-62, 64-70, 73-76, 78, 79, 81-91, 93-99 and 103-107 are pending in this application, with claims 26, 34, 42, 51, 59, 67, 76 and 81-89 being independent. Each of independent claims 26, 34, 42, 51, 59, 67, 76, 82 and 86 has been amended to recite that the gettering layer is formed over the entire surface of the semiconductor film, as set forth in the application at, for example, Fig. 1(B). Claims 81, 83-85 and 87-89 have been amended to correct minor errors. No new matter has been introduced.

Independent claims 81, 83-85 and 87-89, and their dependent claims, have been rejected for obviousness-type double patenting over claims 1-62 of U.S. Patent No. 5,961,743. Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection because the rejection improperly relies upon the specification of the '743 patent when interpreting the clause "introducing phosphorous into at least a portion of said semiconductor film after the crystallization" from claim 1 of the '743 patent so as to correspond to the recited "introducing a gettering material into a surface of said crystallized semiconductor film within a region of 0.1 to 0.2 μ m in depth from the surface of the crystallized semiconductor film." While the specification may be relied upon in determining the meaning of claim terms, it may not be used to read limitations, such as the particular introduction depth, into the claims. Here, there is no claim term in the claims of the '743 patent that can be properly interpreted to require the recited depth limitation.

Independent claims 26, 34, 42 and 76, and their dependent claims, have been rejected for obviousness-type double patenting over claims 27-34 of U.S. Patent No. 6,821,710, and independent claims 51, 59, 67, 82 and 86, and their dependent claims, have been rejected for obviousness-type double patenting over claims 27-34 of the '710 patent in view of Suzuki (U.S. Patent No. 5,644,156). Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection because neither the claims of the '710 patent, Suzuki, nor any proper combination of the two describes or suggests forming a gettering layer comprising phosphorus silicate glass over an entire surface of the semiconductor film, as recited in each of amended independent claims 26, 34, 42, 51, 59, 67, 76, 82 and 86.

Applicant : Yamazaki, et al.
Serial No. : 08/907,182
Filed : August 6, 1997
Page : 19 of 19

Attorney's Docket No.: 07977-
023002 / US2971/2974/2979D1

Instead, the claims of the '710 patent recite forming a phosphorus silicate glass in the region using the same mask as the masking step. Thus, since a mask is employed, the phosphorous silicate glass would not cover the entire surface of the semiconductor film. Suzuki, which is cited as showing a photoelectric conversion device or an EL device, with a p-n junction, also does not disclose this feature.

Applicant submits that all claims are in condition for allowance.

Please charge Deposit Account No. 06-1050 in the amount of \$450 for a two-month extension of time. Please apply any other charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: August 25, 2005



John F. Hayden
Reg. No. 37,640

Customer No. 26171
Fish & Richardson P.C.
1425 K Street, N.W., 11th Floor
Washington, DC 20005-3500
Telephone: (202) 783-5070
Facsimile: (202) 783-2331